

Wilson claims that she was appointed for a six-year term, although it appears that President Clinton expressly appointed her for only one year to complete the unexpired term of Judge Leon Higginbotham, who died before his term expired. It appears also that the Chairwoman of the Committee, Mary Frances Berry, has told the White House that she refuses to recognize the President's new appointee, a person, by the way, of impeccable credentials who is an attorney with a distinguished career. Chairwoman Berry has indicated that it would take federal marshals to seat the President's appointee when the Commission next meets.

As if the American people did not have enough drama in their lives, we hardly need something like this to further erode the public's confidence in the Civil Rights Commission. I think many of us are already concerned with the work of the Commission in recent years. They have taken on rather partisan issues, or at very least they have prosecuted issues in what often appears to be partisan ways, and arguably injudicious ways. I will not get into these concerns, but I am afraid that the Commission is doing great harm to the trust of the American people.

Rather, I would like to comment on the current situation, which is a matter of existing law. What is especially troubling is that it appears that Chairwoman Berry and Ms. Wilson are refusing to comply with the legal opinion of the White House Counsel, Judge Gonzales, as well as the independent opinion of the Justice Department.

In 1994 Congress amended the provisions governing the appointment of the Civil Rights Commissioners. Congress' intent was to ensure that the terms of the Commissioners would not expire all at once. We made provision for staggered terms for the Commissioners, adopting what is universally deemed good practice in the private corporate and nonprofit arenas. Staggered terms preserve institutional memory and experience. To have staggered terms requires that an appointee named to fill an unexpired term serve for only the remainder of that term. To do otherwise would completely eviscerate the staggering that Congress intended. The argument that Ms. Wilson, and Chairwoman Berry, is making—that all appointments, and Ms. Wilson's appointment in particular, are always for terms of six years—would create the untenable opportunity for mischief if Commissioners were to resign at the end of a particular administration. Commissioners could resign as a group, allowing a departing Administration to fill several seats for six year terms, and denying the incoming administration the right to name any Commissioners.

This argument, not only makes no sense, but I am also afraid that this sort of confrontational approach does very real harm to the reputation of the Commission and its individual members who the American people expect to be disinterested, apolitical public

servants. I invite my colleagues to urge the immediate resolution of this matter.

I ask unanimous consent that Judge Gonzales' letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, December 5, 2001.

The Hon. MARY FRANCES BERRY,
Commission on Civil Rights, 624 Ninth Street,
NW., Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM CHAIRWOMAN: I am writing to confirm our conversation yesterday about the recent expiration of Commissioner Victoria Wilson's term of service on the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and the President's forthcoming appointment of her replacement.

As we discussed, Ms. Wilson was appointed to the Commission on January 13, 2000. Official White House records and Ms. Wilson's commission issued by President Clinton, which explicitly states that she was appointed by President Clinton to fill the unexpired term of the late Judge Leon Higginbotham, document that Ms. Wilson's term ended November 29, 2001. To be sure, in our conversation you stated that, when Ms. Wilson received her commission, she attempted to contact the White House Clerk to ask that her commission be reissued to provide for the six year term she is now claiming. However, the Clerk has no record of any such request. In any event, the commission was never reissued, a fact that can only be viewed as confirming the conclusion that Ms. Wilson's term expired on November 29, 2001 in accordance with her commission.

The Office of Legal Counsel of the Department of Justice has issued a legal opinion confirming that Ms. Wilson's term expired on November 29, 2001. The opinion rests on an analysis of the Commission's organic statute, in particular the intent of Congress expressed therein to provide for staggered terms of commissioners. The legislative history of the 1994 amendments to the statute also makes plain that Congress intended to preserve the system of staggered terms. As you yourself noted in 1983 in testimony before Congress, the staggered terms system was proposed by commission members to limit the degree of political influence over the commission. H.R. 98-197, 1983 U.S.C.A.A.N. 1989, 1992. Of course, the orderly staggering of terms intended by Congress would be frustrated if vacancies created through death or resignation could be filled with commissioners appointed for new six year terms. Ultimately, the balance between continuity and change sought by Congress in allowing a fixed number of new members to be appointed at regular intervals would give way to a process in which Presidents and commissioners alike could "game the system" by timing resignations and appointments.

In our conversation yesterday, I explained the legal position of the White House and the Department of Justice. I also explained, that President Bush has selected an individual—Peter Kirsanow—whom he intends to appoint to succeed Ms. Wilson. Mr. Kirsanow is an extraordinarily well-qualified individual. He is a partner with a major Cleveland law firm and has served as chair of the Center for New Black Leadership and as labor counsel for the City of Cleveland. Because there is a vacancy on the Commission, the President intends to appoint Mr. Kirsanow as a commissioner as soon as possible.

You maintained, however, that you support Ms. Wilson in her decision to purport

not to vacate her position and to continue service and to attend the Commission's upcoming meeting on December 7. Moreover, you informed me that you do not consider yourself to be bound by opinions of the Department of Justice nor do you intend to abide by them or to follow the directives of the President in this matter. You further informed me that you will refuse to administer the oath of office to the President's appointee. I advised you that any federal official authorized to administer oaths generally could swear in Mr. Kirsanow.

Finally, you stated that, even if Ms. Wilson's successor has been lawfully appointed and has taken the oath of office, you will refuse to allow him to be seated at the Commission's next meeting. You went so far as to state that it would require the presence of federal Marshals to seat him.

I respectfully urge you to abandon this confrontational and legally untenable position. As to questions regarding Ms. Wilson's status, we view these as a matter between Ms. Wilson and the White House. With respect to Mr. Kirsanow, any actions blocking him from entering service following a valid appointment would, in my opinion, violate the law. The President expects his appointee to take office upon taking the oath and to attend upcoming meetings as a duly appointed commissioner. The President also expects all sworn officers of the United States government to follow the law.

In sum, the law and official documents make clear that Ms. Wilson's term expired last week, November 29, 2001, and that she is no longer a member of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. As soon as Mr. Kirsanow takes the statutory oath, the incumbent commissioners and staff should treat the President's new appointee as a full member of the Commission.

Sincerely,

ALBERTO R. GONZALES,
Counsel to the President.

CONFIRMATION OF JOHN WALTERS AS DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, I want to congratulate John Walters, the new Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, on his confirmation by the Senate last night. I have no doubt that the hard work and experience he brings to the Office will greatly benefit our efforts to reduce drug abuse in our nation.

I do wish he could have been confirmed much earlier, considering the challenges we face at home and overseas. In the last eight years alone, teenage drug use has almost doubled and, as I speak, terrorists, including those we are fighting in Afghanistan and across the globe, are using the drug trade to help finance their operations.

President Bush nominated John Walters in early June, but he was not granted a hearing until October 10. Finally, on November 8 and five months after his nomination, John Walters was favorably voted out of the Senate Judiciary Committee, 14 to 5, with five Democrats joining all the Republicans in support of his confirmation. Seven months to be confirmed is not a credit to the workings of the Senate.

It was disappointing that, of the small number of activists opposed to

the nomination of John Walters, a few carried on a campaign to distort his public policy positions. Americans would not have known if they just listened to these activists that John Walters believes that many first-time, non-violent offenders ought to be diverted into treatment. In fact, when he was deputy drug czar in the first Bush Administration under William Bennett, he helped secure increases in the drug treatment budget in four years that were double what the previous administration managed in eight. And it's also noteworthy that the previous administration enforced the very same anti-drug laws that some of John Walters' opponents today criticize, and the same administration made no effort to change them.

I look forward to working with John Walters and hope his needlessly protracted nomination process will not discourage other outstanding Americans from considering public service to our Nation.

OUR CONSTITUTION

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, let me begin by saying plainly and unabashedly that I love our flag. I wear an American flag lapel pin to work every single day. We fly "Old Glory" at our home throughout the year and display it proudly in each of my Senate offices. The American flag is even displayed on the minivan that I drive all over our State. It is the symbol of our freedom and a reflection of our pride in our great Nation.

But while our flag is the symbol of our freedom, our Nation's Constitution is its guarantee. It is the foundation on which was built the longest living experiment in democracy in the history of the world. Though written by man, I believe it to be divinely inspired. Before beginning 23 years of service as a naval flight officer, I took the same oath as each of the men and women now fighting overseas. We swore to protect our Nation's safety and honor and defend our Constitution against all enemies both foreign and domestic. The men and women of our armed forces past and present each pledged to lay down their lives in defense of the freedoms our Constitution provides. I can think of no greater honor, no more solemn a commitment, than this pledge.

On a cold December 7, 214 years ago, Delawareans stood proudly and declared their belief in the right of self-government by becoming the first to ratify the United States Constitution. Each year we celebrate this act of leadership, courage, and wisdom. While our constitution has proved the most durable model for democracy, at the time, it was a revolutionary and some thought risky step forward. For the power of its words and the brilliance of its logic is matched only by the astounding scope of what it sought to achieve, to "establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general

Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity."

It was truly a miraculous undertaking, and we celebrate that Delaware had the courage to lead the world in embracing this new standard excellence in self-government.

But as we reflect on this bold step towards freedom, there is a stain on our celebration.

After the Constitution's ratification, the Bill of Rights sought to provide greater and more lasting liberties than any single document before or since. In 1789, the Federal Government sent the articles that would make up the Bill of Rights to States for ratification. While other States sent their approval of ratification back to the Federal Government on separate parchment, in their enthusiasm, Delaware's leaders signed their approval directly on their copy of the document and returned it to the Federal Government. While other states are now able to display their copies of the original Bill of Rights, Delaware's is locked in a drawer in the National Archives near College Park, Maryland. Our State and this document deserve better. I call today on the National Archives to return this copy of the Bill of Rights to its place of ratification. I ask that in the spirit of celebration surrounding Delaware Day, the National Archives return to us this important part of our State's history.

We are witnessing a time of renewed respect for our Nation at home and abroad. In fact, in all of my life, I've never witnessed a warmer embrace of our flag or a greater sense of pride for our country than we've seen since September 11. Almost everywhere we turn, we see signs of this renewed national pride on our homes, office buildings, factories, schools, construction sites, on the vehicles we drive, and as well at thousands of sporting events, parades and gatherings across our country. A spirit of patriotism has swept across our Nation in a way that I've never seen. It is both comforting and inspiring to me and, I know, to Americans everywhere.

This December, let us pause in thanks to those wise Delawareans who started our Nation along the road to becoming the most successful and long-lasting democracy in world history. They gave us a great gift for which we, and much of the world, will be forever thankful.

BRADY ACT SUCCESSES

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, November 30 was the eighth anniversary of the signing of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act. The passage of that legislation was a watershed event in the fight against gun violence. According to the Centers for Disease Control statistics cited by the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, since the Brady Law went into effect, the number of gun deaths in the United

States has dropped 27 percent, from 39,595 in 1993 to 28,874 in 1999. Even more dramatically, the number of gun homicides dropped by more than 40 percent from 18,253 in 1993 to 10,828 in 1999.

While the Brady Law is not the only reason for the decrease, its impact on gun violence cannot be overlooked. Keeping guns out of criminal hands saves lives. The law's requirement that gun purchasers undergo a criminal background check before they can buy a firearm has stopped literally hundreds of thousands of criminals and others prohibited by law from purchasing a gun.

The obvious success of the Brady Law should spur us to do more to stop gun violence. A logical step would be to extend the Brady Law's mandatory criminal background check provisions. As it stands, the law only applies to guns sold by Federal firearms licensees. It does not cover gun sales by unlicensed private sellers at gun shows. Despite the evidence that background checks save lives, lobbyists from the National Rifle Association and their allies have fought against legislation to close the "gun show loophole." The Senate should not allow itself to be held hostage by the gun lobby. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting efforts to bring legislation to the floor to close the gun show loophole.

CHANGES TO H. CON. RES. 83 PURSUANT TO SECTION 314

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, section 314 of the Congressional Budget Act, as amended, requires the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee to make adjustments to budget resolution allocations and aggregates for amounts designated as emergency requirements pursuant to section 252(e) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended.

Pursuant to section 314, I hereby submit the following revisions to H. Con. Res. 83 as a result of provisions designated as emergency requirements in P.L. 107-42, the Air Transportation Safety and System Stabilization Act. This measure was enacted into law on September 22, 2001.

I ask consent that the following table be printed in the RECORD, which reflects the changes made to the allocations provided to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and to the budget resolution aggregates enforced under section 311(2)(A) of the Congressional Budget Act, as amended.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[In millions of dollars]

Current Allocation to the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee:	
FY 2002 Budget Authority	13,452
FY 2002 Outlays	9,630
FY 2002-06 Budget Authority	72,789
FY 2002-06 Outlays	50,419
FY 2002-11 Budget Authority	164,611